

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL TORONTO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4706
INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMCONSUL MONTREAL
AMCONSUL QUEBEC
ALL OTHER CONSULATE GENERAL IN CANADA VIA POUCH

UNCLAS TORONTO 2360

E.O. 11652 N/A
TAGS: PGOV, CA
SUBJECT: ONTARIO PREMIER'S COMMENTS ON FIRST MINISTERS' MEETING
AND QUEBEC

IN AN ADDRESS DECEMBER 16 TO THE ONTARIO LEGISLATURE REGARDING
A NONCONDIDENCE MOTION ON THE PROVINCIAL BUDGET PUT FORWARD BY
THE NDP, PREMIER DAVIS INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS ON THE
FIRST MINISTERS MEETING AND QUEBEC:

QUOTE - MR. SPEAKER, I INDICATED THAT I WOULD USE THE
OPPORTUNITY OF THESE REMARKS TO DEAL WITH OUR PARTICIPATION AT
THE FIRST MINISTER'S CONFERENCE EARLIER THIS WEEK AND ANY
REACTIONS WE MIGHT HAVE TO THE PARTICIPATION OF QUEBEC AT THAT
MEETING.

"LET ME SAY FIRST OF ALL THAT THE CONCESSIONS MADE BY THE
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WITH RESPECT TO THE REVENUE GUARANTEE ARE,
INDEED, SIGNIFICANT. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT MOVED FROM ZERO
TO TWO POINTS LARGELY BECAUSE THE PROVINCIAL CONSENSUS ON THE
ISSUED OF REVENUE GUARANTEE HELD LONG ENOUGH FOR THE FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT TO SENSE THE IMPORTANCE OF RESPONDING. THAT PROVINCIAL
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CONSENSUS HELD LARGELY BECAUSE OF THE LEADERSHIP AND DIRECTION
PROVIDED BY THIS PROVINCE AND PARTICULARLY, THE TREASURER
AND MINISTER OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS OF OUR OWN PROVINCE,
THE HONORABLE MEMBER FOR CHATHAM KENT

"LET ME SAY AS WELL, THAT THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT OF THE PROVINCE

OF QUEBEC, SEPARATING OUT ITS LONG TERM GOALS FROM SHORT TERM GOALS WAS GENERALLY MOST SUPPORTIVE OF THE PROVINCIAL CONSENSUS BOTH IN PUBLIC AND IN PRIVATE.

"I DID NOT HESITATE TO DISAGREE WITH THE PREMIER OF QUEBEC WHEN HE ADVANCED THE VIEW THAT THE TENSIONS AND ONGOING NEGOTIATIONS WERE SYMPTOMATIC OF A FEDERAL SYSTEM THAT DID NOT WORK; INDEED I ADVANCED THE VIEW THAT THESE VERY TENSIONS ARE WHAT MAKES THIS COUNTRY QUALITATIVLEY DIFFERENT IN ITS GOVERNANCE AND POLITICS FROM OUR FRIENDS TO THE SOUTH -- AND IN MY VIEW QUALITATIVELY BETTER; IT SPEAKS OF A HEALTHY SUSPICIAON OF THE CONCENTRATION OF POLITICAL, TAXING OR ECONOMIC POWER IN ANY ONE PLACE.

"I BELIEVE THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF QUEBEC IS EVALUATING VERY ISSUE ON ITS OWN MERITS -- AND DOING SO WITH A VIEW TO ITS LONG AND SHORT TERM GOALS. I FOUND THE PRIME MINISTER, WHILE STILL NOT AS SENSITIVE TO PROVINCIAL FISCAL CONCERS AS WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE BEEN OPEN TO REASONABLE COMPROMISE WHEN THE PROVINCES STOOD FIRMLY -- AND I DO BELIEVE THAT THAT REPRESENTS PROGRESS FOR NATIONAL UNITY AND REGIONAL RECONCILIATION. UNQUOTE. DIGGINS

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